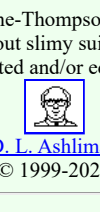
Frog Kings

folktales of Aarne-Thompson-Uther type 440
about slimy suitors
translated and/or edited by



D. L. Ashliman
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The Frog King; or, Iron Heinrich

Germany

Once upon a time there was a princess who went out into a forest and sat next to a cool well. She took great pleasure in throwing a golden ball into the air and catching it, but once it went too high. She held out her hand with her fingers curved to catch it, but it fell to the ground and rolled and rolled right into the water.

Horrified, the princess followed it with her eyes, but the well was so deep that she could not see its bottom. Then she began to cry bitterly, "I'd give anything, if only I could get my ball back: my clothes, my precious stones, my pearls, anything in the world." At this a frog stuck his head out of the water and said, "Princess, why are you crying so bitterly?"

"Oh," she said, "you ugly frog, how can you help me? My golden ball has fallen into the well."

The frog said, "I do not want your pearls, your precious stones, and your clothes, but if you'll accept me as a companion and let me sit next to you and eat from your plate and sleep in your bed, and if you'll love and cherish me, then I'll bring your ball back to you."

The princess thought, "What is this stupid frog trying to say? After all, he does have to stay here in the water. But still, maybe he can get my ball. I'll go ahead and say yes," and she said aloud, "Yes, for all I care. Just bring me back my golden ball, and I'll promise everything."

The frog stuck his head under the water and dove to the bottom. He returned a short time later with the golden ball in his mouth and threw it onto the land. When the princess saw her ball once again, she rushed toward it, picked it up, and was so happy to have it in her hand again, that she could think of nothing else than to run home with it. The frog called after her, "Wait, princess, take me with you like you promised," but she paid no attention to him.

The next day the princess was sitting at her table when she heard something coming up the marble steps: plop, plop. Then there came a knock at the door, and a voice called out, "Princess, princess, open the door for me!" She ran and opened the door. It was the frog, whom she had put completely out of her mind. Frightened, she slammed the door shut and returned to the table.

The king saw that her heart was pounding and asked, "Why are you afraid?"

"There is a disgusting frog out there," she said, "who got my golden ball out of the water. I promised him that he could be my companion, but I didn't think that he could leave his water, but now he is just outside the door and wants to com in." Just then there came a second knock at the door, and a voice called out:

Youngest daughter of the king,
Open up the door for me,
Don't you know what yesterday,
You said to me down by the well?
Youngest daughter of the king,
Open up the door for me.

The king said, "What you have promised, you must keep. Go and let the frog in." She obeyed, and the frog hopped in, then followed her up to her chair.

After she had sat down again, he called out, "Lift me up onto your chair and let me sit next to you." The princess did not want to, but the king commanded her to do it. When the frog was seated next to her he said, "Now push your golden plate closer. I want to eat from it." She had to do this as well. When he had eaten all he wanted, he said, "Now I am tired and want to sleep. Take me to your room, make your bed, so that we can lie in it together."

The princess was horrified when she heard that. She was afraid of the cold frog and did not dare to even touch him, and yet he was supposed to lie next to her in her bed; she began to cry and didn't want to at all. Then the king became angry and commanded her to do what she had promised. There was no helping it; she had to do what her father wanted, but in her heart she was bitterly angry. She picked up the frog with two fingers, carried him to her room, and climbed into bed, but instead of laying him next to herself, she threw him bang! against the wall. "Now you will leave me in peace, you ugly frog!" But when the frog came down onto the bed, he was a handsome young prince, and he was her dear companion, and she held him in esteem as she had promised, and they fell asleep together with pleasure.

The next morning the prince's faithful Heinrich arrived in a splendid carriage drawn by eight horses and decorated with feathers and glistening with gold. He had been so saddened by the prince's enchantment that he had had to place three iron bands around his heart to keep it from bursting in sorrow. The prince climbed into the carriage with the princess. His faithful servant stood at the rear to drive them to his kingdom. After they had gone a short distance, the prince heard a loud crack. He turned around and said:

"Heinrich, the carriage is breaking apart."
"No, my lord, the carriage it's not,
But one of the bands surrounding my heart,
That suffered such great pain,
When you were sitting in the well,
When you were a frog."

Once again, and then once again the prince heard a cracking sound and thought that the carriage was breaking apart, but it was the bands springing from faithful Heinrich's heart because his master was now redeemed and happy.

- Source: Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, "Der Froschkönig oder der eiserne Heinrich," *Kinder- und Hausmärchen,* 1st ed., vol. 1 (Berlin: Realschulbuchhandlung, 1812), no. 1, pp. 1-5.
- Translated by D. L. Ashliman. © 1999.
- Links to the German text (final edition, 1857):
    - Books.google.com: Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, "Der Froschkönig oder der eiserne Heinrich," *Kinder und Hausmärchen*, vol. 1 (Göttingen: Verlag der Dieterichschen Buchhandlung, 1857), no. 1, pp. 1-5.
    - Internet Archive: Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, "Der Froschkönig oder der eiserne Heinrich," *Kinder und Hausmärchen*, vol. 1 (Göttingen: Verlag der Dieterichschen Buchhandlung, 1857), no. 1, pp. 1-5.
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The Frog Prince

A translation of the Grimms' "Frog King" by Edgar Taylor

One fine evening a young princess went into a wood, and sat down by the side of a cool spring of water. She had a golden ball in her hand, which was her favorite plaything, and she amused herself with tossing it into the air and catching it again as it fell. After a time she threw it up so high that when she stretched out her hand to catch it, the ball bounded away and rolled along upon the ground, till at last it fell into the spring. The princess looked into the spring after her ball; but it was very deep, so deep that she could not see the bottom of it.

Then she began to lament her loss, and said, "Alas! If I could only get my ball again, I would give all my fine clothes and jewels, and everything that I have in the world."

Whilst she was speaking a frog put its head out of the water and said, "Princess, why do you weep so bitterly?"

"Alas! said she, "What can you do for me, you nasty frog? My golden ball has fallen into the spring."

The frog said, "I want not your pearls and jewels and fine clothes; but if you will love me and let me live with you, and eat from your little golden plate, and sleep upon your little bed, I will bring you your ball again."

"What nonsense," thought the princess, "This silly frog is talking! He can never get out of the well. However, he may be able to get my ball for me; and therefore I will promise him what he asks." So she said to the frog, "Well, if you will bring me my ball, I promise to do all you require."

Then the frog put his head down, and dived deep under the water; and after a little while he came up again with the ball in his mouth, and threw it on the ground. As soon as the young princess saw her ball, she ran to pick it up, and was so overjoyed to have it in her hand again, that she never thought of the frog, but ran home with it as fast as she could.

The frog called after her, "Stay, princess, and take me with you as you promised." But she did not stop to hear a word.

The next day, just as the princess had sat down to dinner, she heard a strange noise, tap-tap, as if somebody was coming up the marble staircase. And soon afterwards something knocked gently at the door, and said,

Open the door, my princess dear,
Open the door to thy true love here!
And mind the words that thou and I said
By the fountain cool in the greenwood shade.

Then the princess ran to the door and opened it, and there she saw the frog, whom she had quite forgotten. She was terribly frightened, and shutting the door as fast as she could, came back to her seat. The king, her father, asked her what had frightened her.

"There is a nasty frog," said she, "at the door, who lifted my ball out of the spring this morning. I promised him that he should live with me here, thinking that he could never get out of the spring; but there he is at the door and wants to come in!"

While she was speaking the frog knocked again at the door, and said,

Open the door, my princess dear,
Open the door to thy true love here!
And mind the words that thou and I said
By the fountain cool in the greenwood shade.

The king said to the young princess, "As you have made a promise, you must keep it. So go and let him in."

She did so, and the frog hopped into the room, and came up close to the table. "Pray lift me upon a chair," said he to the princess, "and let me sit next to you." As soon as she had done this, the frog said, "Put your plate closer to me that I may eat out of it." This she did. And when he had eaten as much as he could, he said, "Now I am tired. Carry me upstairs and put me into your little bed."

And the princess took him up in her hand and put him upon the pillow of her own little bed, where he slept all night long. As soon as it was light he jumped up, hopped downstairs, and went out of the house.

"Now," thought the princess, "he is gone, and I shall be troubled with him no more."

But she was mistaken; for when night came again, she heard the same tapping at the door, and when she opened it, the frog came in and slept upon her pillow as before till the morning broke.

And the third night he did the same; but when the princess awoke on the following morning, she was astonished to see, instead of the frog, a handsome prince gazing on her with the most beautiful eyes that ever were seen, and standing at the head of her bed.

He told her that he had been enchanted by a malicious fairy, who had changed him into the form of a frog, in which he was fated to remain till some princess should take him out of the spring and let him sleep upon her bed for three nights. "You," said the prince, "have broken this cruel charm, and now I have nothing to wish for but that you should go with me into my father's kingdom, where I will marry you, and love you as long as you live."

The young princess, you may be sure, was not long in giving her consent; and as they spoke a splendid carriage drove up with eight beautiful horses decked with plumes of feathers and golden harness, and behind rode the prince's servant, the faithful Henry, who had bewailed the misfortune of his dear master so long and bitterly that his heart had well nigh burst. Then all set out full of joy for the prince's kingdom, where they arrived safely, and lived happily a great many years.

- Source (books.google.com): *German Popular Stories, translated [by Edgar Taylor] from the Kinder und Haus Märchen, collected by M. M. Grimm, from Oral Tradition* (London: C. Baldwyn, 1823), pp. 205-210.
- The above book was the first translation of the Grimms' folktales into English.
- Edgar Taylor, the translator of "The Frog King," departs from his source in substantial ways. Not only does he change the title, but he totally revises the ending, replacing the Grimms' violent resolution with one of passivity. It appears that, in his judgment, the English readers of the 1820's, unlike their German counterparts, would not accept a heroine who throws her frisky bed companion against the wall.
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The Frog Prince

Germany

Once upon a time there was a king who had three daughters. In his courtyard there was a well with wonderful clear water. One hot summer day the oldest daughter went down and drew herself a glassful, but when she held it to the sun, she saw that it was cloudy. This seemed strange to her, and she was about to pour it back when a frog appeared in the water, stuck his head into the air, then jumped out onto the well's edge, saying:

If you will be my sweetheart dear,
Then I will give you water clear.

"Ugh! Who wants to be the sweetheart of an ugly frog!" exclaimed the princess and ran away. She told her sisters about the amazing frog down at the well who was making the water cloudy. The second one was curious, so she too went down and drew herself a glassful, but it was so cloudy that she could not drink it. Once again the frog appeared at the well's edge and said:

If you will be my sweetheart dear,
Then I will give you water clear.

"Not I!" said the princess, and ran away. Finally the third sister came and drew a glassful, but it was no better than before. The frog also said to her:

If you will be my sweetheart dear,
Then I will give you water clear.

"Why not! I'll be your sweetheart. Just give me some clean water," she said, while thinking, "There's no harm in this. You can promise him anything, for a stupid frog can never be your sweetheart."

The frog sprang back into the water, and when she drew another glassful it was so clear that the sun glistened in it with joy. She drank all she wanted and then took some up to her sisters, saying, "Why were you so stupid as to be afraid of a frog?"

The princess did not think anything more about it until that evening after she had gone to bed. Before she fell asleep she heard something scratching at the door and a voice singing:

Open up! Open up!
Youngest daughter of the king.
Remember that you promised me
While I was sitting in the well,
That you would be my sweetheart dear,
If I would give you water clear.

"Ugh! That's my boyfriend the frog," said the princess. "I promised, so I will have to open the door for him." She got up, opened the door a crack, and went back to bed. The frog hopped after her, then hopped onto her bed where he lay at her feet until the night was over and the morning dawned. Then he jumped down and disappeared out the door.

The next evening, when the princess once more had just gone to bed, he scratched and sang again at the door. The princess let him in, and he again lay at her feet until daylight came. He came again on the third evening, as on the two previous ones. "This is the last time that I'll let you in," said the princess. "It will not happen again in the future." Then the frog jumped under her pillow, and the princess fell asleep. She awoke in the morning, thinking that the frog would hop away once again, but now a beautiful young prince was standing before her. He told her that he had been an enchanted frog and that she had broken the spell by promising to be his sweetheart. Then they both went to the king who gave them his blessing, and they were married. The two other sisters were angry with themselves that they had not taken the frog for their sweetheart.

- Source: Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, "Der Froschprinz," *Kinder- und Hausmärchen*, 1st ed., vol. 2 (Berlin: Realschulbuchhandlung, 1815), no. 13, pp. 91-93.
- Because of its close similarity with "The Frog King," this tale was omitted from all future editions of the Grimms' collection. Curiously, the first English translator of the Grimms' tales, Edgar Taylor, combined the two versions. He called the story "The Frog Prince," giving it the beginning of the Grimms' "The Frog King" and the conclusion of the Grimms' "The Frog Prince."
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The Enchanted Frog

Germany

Once upon a time there was a merchant who had three daughters, but his wife was with God. Once he planned a journey across the ocean to a foreign land in order to bring back gold and other valuable things. He consoled his weeping children, saying, "I will bring back something beautiful for you. What do you want?"

The oldest asked for a silk dress, "and it must be made of three kinds of silk."

The second desired a feathered hat, "and it must have three kinds of feathers."

The youngest finally said, "Bring me a rose, dear father, and it must be fresh and have three colors."

The merchant promised to do this, kissed his daughters, and departed.

After arriving in the foreign land, he ordered the dress of three kinds of silk for his oldest daughter and the hat with three kinds of feathers for the second one. Both were soon finished, and of seldom splendor. Then he sent messengers throughout the entire country to seek a three-colored rose for his youngest and dearest daughter, but they all returned empty handed, even though the merchant had promised a high price, and even though there were more roses there than there are daisies here.

Sadly he set off for home and was downhearted the entire voyage. This side of the ocean he came to a large garden in which there was nothing but roses and roses. He went inside and looked, and behold, on a slender bush in the middle of the garden there was a three-colored rose. Filled with joy, he plucked it, and was about to leave, when he was magically frozen in place.

A voice behind him cried out, "What do you want in my garden?" He looked up. A large frog was sitting there on the bank of a clear pond staring at him with its goggle-eyes. It said, "You have broken my dear rose. This will cost you your life unless you give me your youngest daughter to wife."

The merchant was terrified. He begged and he pleaded, but all to no avail, and in the end he had to agree to marry his dearest daughter to the ugly frog. He could now move his feet, and he freely walked out of the garden. The frog called out after him, "In seven days I shall come for my wife!"

With great sorrow the merchant gave his youngest daughter the fresh rose and told her what had happened. When the terrible day arrived, she crept under her bed, for she did not at all want to go. At the hour of noon a stately carriage drove up. The frog sent his servants into the house, and they immediately went to the bedroom and dragged the screaming maiden from beneath her bed, then carried her to the carriage. The horses leaped forward, and a short time later they were in the blossoming rose garden. In the middle of the garden, immediately behind the clear pond, there stood a small house. They took the bride into the house and laid her on a soft bed. The frog, however, sprang into the water.

Darkness fell, and after the maiden had awakened from her unconsciousness, she heard the frog outside singing wonderfully sweet melodies. As midnight approached, he sang ever more sweetly, and came closer and closer to her. At midnight the bedroom door opened, and the frog jumped onto her bed. However, he had touched her with his sweet songs, and she took him into bed with her and warmly covered him up.

The next morning when she opened her eyes, behold, the ugly frog was now the handsomest prince in the world. He thanked her with all his heart, saying, "You have redeemed me and are now my wife!" And they lived long and happily together.

- Source (books.google.com): Carl and Theodor Colshorn, "Der verwunschene Frosch," *Märchen und Sagen* (Hannover: Verlag von Carl Rümpler, 1854), , no. 42, pp. 139-41.
- Source (Internet Archive): Carl and Theodor Colshorn, "Der verwunschene Frosch," *Märchen und Sagen* (Hannover: Verlag von Carl Rümpler, 1854), , no. 42, pp. 139-41.
- The Colshorns' source: "Oral in Platendorf and in Hannover."
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The Singing Frog

Denmark

There was once a priest who had two daughters. They went out into service, and the one became a servant at the king's castle. One day they went with each other down to the beach to bathe. There they heard someone singing beautifully. The sister who was the king's servant wished she could have a husband who could sing so beautifully.

Then a frog jumped out of the water onto her lap and said, "Do you want me for your husband?"

She answered no.

When he asked the same thing again, her sister told her that she could make the promise, for it would not mean anything. She therefore answered yes when the frog asked the third time if she wanted him for a husband.

The girl then went back to the king's castle. The frog jumped along after her. When she went inside and slammed the door in front of him, he sang:

Open the door for me, my sweet little woman,
For the sake of your rose-colored blood!
Do you remember what you promised me
At the beach when you were bathing?

She would not open the door.

Then the king came by and asked why she did not open the door. The girl said it that was only a frog who was not worth opening the door for.

The king said that she should open the door. She then opened it, and the frog jumped in, singing:

Pull up a chair for me, my sweet little woman,
For the sake of your rose-colored blood!
Do you remember what you promised me
At the beach when you were bathing?

The girl did not want to do this, and she said that it was a strange thing to offer a chair to such a slimy thing; but the king said she should do so, and then he himself pulled up a chair.

The girl put the chair in front of the frog. He jumped up and sat down; then he sang:

Spread a tablecloth for me, my sweet little woman,
For the sake of your rose-colored blood!
Do you remember what you promised me
At the beach when you were bathing?

At first the girl did not want to do this. Then the king said that she should do so, and he himself brought forth a tablecloth.

She spread tablecloth before the frog, and he sang:

Put food on it for me, my sweet little woman
For the sake of your rose-colored blood!
Do you remember what you promised me
At the beach when you were bathing?

The girl again objected; but the king said that she should do so. He himself brought forth some food, and the girl placed it before the frog.

Then the frog sang:

Bring me some beer, my sweet little woman,
For the sake of your rose-colored blood!
Do you remember what you promised me
At the beach when you were bathing?

Beer was brought to him, and after he had eaten and drunk, he sang:

Make a bed for me, my sweet little woman,
For the sake of your rose-colored blood!
Do you remember what you promised me
At the beach when you were bathing?

The girl thought that it would not be right to make a bed for such a wet, slimy thing. But the king said that she should not refuse, and he himself brought in the bedding. After the girl had had made the bed, the frog sang:

Pull up a chair for me, my sweet little woman,
For the sake of your rose-colored blood!
Do you remember what you promised me
At the beach when you were bathing?

The frog could not jump up into bed without first jumping up onto the chair. Once in bed he sang:

Come to bed with me, my sweet little woman,
For the sake of your rose-colored blood!
Do you remember what you promised me
At the beach when you were bathing?

The girl was angry and did not want to do this, but the king told her to do so. She did not dare to lie alone with the frog, but she could take her boyfriend Per the servant with her.

Once the frog was in bed with her, he asked her to poke three holes into his right front leg with a needle and thus draw three drops of blood. The girl did this, and the frog was transformed into a handsome prince. The frog-skin flew up through the chimney.

It turned out that the frog was the king's son who had been bewitched many years ago. The prince then married the girl and became king after his father. In compensation Per the servant was awarded a principality, because he had to give u his girlfriend to the prince.

- Source (books.google.com): Evald Tang Kristensen, "Den syngende frø," *Skattegraveren: Et Tidsskrift*, vol. 9 (January-June, 1888), no. 331, pp. 106-108.
- Kristensen's source: Jens Jakobsen, who heard the tale from an old woman in Mejlby.
- Mejlby is a village about 20 kilometers north of Aarhus in Jutland, Denmark.
- Link to another Danish version of this tale (books.google.com): Svend Grundtvig, "Skruptudsen," *Gamle danske Minder I Folkemunde: Folkeæventyr, Folkeviser, Folkesagn*, vol. 3 (Copenhagen: C. G. Iversens Forlagshandel, 1861), no. 38, pp. 66-68.
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The Wonderful Frog

Hungary

There was once, I don't know where, a man who had three daughters. One day the father thus spoke to the eldest girl, "Go, my daughter, and fetch me, some fresh water from the well."

The girl went, but when she came to the well a huge frog called out to her from the bottom, that he would not allow her to draw water in her jug until she threw him down the gold ring on her finger.

"Nothing else? Is that all you want?" replied the girl. "I won't give away my rings to such an ugly creature as you." And she returned as she came with the empty pitchers.

So the father sent the second girl, and she fared as the first; the frog would not let her have any water, as she refused to throw down her gold ring. Her father gave his two elder daughters a good scolding, and then thus addressed the youngest, "You go, Betsie, my dear, you have always been a clever girl. I'm sure you will be able to get some water, and will not allow your father to suffer thirst. So, shame your sisters!"

Betsie picked up the pitchers and went, but the frog again refused the water unless she threw her ring down; but she, as she was very fond of her father, threw the ring in as demanded, and returned home with full pitchers to her father's great delight.

In the evening, as soon as darkness set in, the frog crawled out of the well, and thus commenced to shout in front of Betsie's father's door, "Father-in-law! Father-in-law! I should like something to eat."

The man got angry, and called out to his daughters; "Give something in a broken plate to that ugly frog to gnaw."

"Father-in-law! Father-in-law! This won't do for me; I want some roast meat on a tin plate," retorted the frog.

"Give him something on a tin plate then, or else he will cast a spell on us," said the father.

The frog began to eat heartily, and, having had enough, again commenced to croak: "Father-in-law! Father- in-law! I want something to drink."

"Give him some slops in a broken pot," said the father.

"Father-in-law! Father-in-law! I won't have this; I want some wine in a nice tumbler."

"Give him some wine then," angrily called out the father.

He guzzled up his wine and began again, "Father-in-law! Father-in-law! I would like to go to sleep."

"Throw him some rags in a corner," was the reply.

"Father-in-law! Father-in-law! I won't have that; I want a silk bed," croaked the frog. This was also given to him; but no sooner has he gone to bed than again he began to croak, "Father-in-law! Father-in-law! I want a girl, indeed."

"Go, my daughter, and lie by the side of him," said the father to the eldest.

"Father-in-law! Father-in law! I don't want that, I want another."

The father sent the second girl, but the frog again croaked: "Father-in-law! Father-in-law! I don't want that, Betsie is the girl I want."

"Go, my Betsie," said the father, quite disheartened, "else this confounded monster will cast a spell on us."

So Betsie went to bed with the frog, but her father thoughtfully left a lamp burning on the top of the oven; noticing which, the frog crawled out of bed and blew the lamp out. The father lighted it again, but the frog put it out as before, and so it happened a third time. The father saw that the frog would not yield, and was therefore obliged to leave his dear little Betsie in the dark by the side of the ugly frog, and felt great anxiety about her.

In the morning, when the father and the two elder girls got up, they opened their eyes and mouths wide in astonishment, because the frog had disappeared, and by the side of Betsie they found a handsome Magyar lad, with auburn locks, in a beautiful costume, with gold braid and buttons and gold spurs on his boots. The handsome lad asked for Betsie's hand, and, having received the father's consent, they hastened to celebrate the wedding, so that christening might not follow the wedding too soon.

The two elder sisters looked with invidious eyes on Betsie, as they also were very much smitten with the handsome lad. Betsie was very happy after, so happy that if anyone doubt it he can satisfy himself with his own eyes. If she is still alive, let him go and look for her, and try to find her in this big world.

- Source (books.google.com): W. Henry Jones and Lewis L. Kropf, *The Folk-Tales of the Magyars* (London: Published for the Folk-Lore Society by Elliot Stock, 1889), pp. 224-26.
- Source (Internet Archive): W. Henry Jones and Lewis L. Kropf, *The Folk-Tales of the Magyars* (London: Published for the Folk-Lore Society by Elliot Stock, 1889), pp. 224-26.
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The Princess and the Frog

Ireland

Once upon a time there lived a king and his daughter. She was about twenty years of age. One day as she was playing [with] a golden ball. There was a pond of water outside the palace. As she was playing, the ball fell into the pond, and she began to cry.

Then a frog came up and asked why she was crying.

She said her ball fell into the pond.

"If you give me three wishes I will bring it up to you," said the frog. When she got the ball she ran away, but the frog was calling her.

The next day the frog came to the door, and the servant opened it.

"Is the king's youngest daughter inside?" said the frog.

When the daughter came out she closed the door, and the king asked her where did she see the frog?

She said she was playing [with] a ball, and it fell into the pond, and the frog brought it up.

The king said that she would have to drink from the one cup, and to eat from the one plate, and she would have to go to bed with the frog.

She did not like that. She went to bed, but she did not like to bring the frog, but she had to do so. She threw the frog on the floor, but she was not sleeping. So she got up, and she threw the frog into the bed. The frog began to tickle her toes and the next morning who was in it but a fine young man.

- Source: dúchas.ie >> The Schools' Collection >> Co. Galway >> Cill Chuana, pp. 167-68.
- The material on this site is made available under the CC BY-NC 4.0 licence.
- The Schools' Collection is a manuscript collection of folklore compiled by schoolchildren in Ireland in the 1930s.
- Informant: Martin Dooley, aged 50 years, a farmer in Kilcoona, County Galway.
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A Story: The Girl and the Frog

Ireland

Once upon a time there was a girl playing be the side of a river. She was playing with a golden ball. And all of a sudden the ball fell into the river and she began weeping.

When all of a sudden a frog put up his head from over the water and said, "If I catch you the ball, what will you give me?"

"I will you whatever you ask."

So the frog ducked down under the water and brought her up the ball.

As soon as she got the ball off she went across the fields home to her father's house. She went upstairs eating her dinner no sooner had she been upstairs and seated on her chair to eat her dinner when a knock came to the door.

The father went up to open it, and when he saw the frog he was amazed and asked him what he wanted, and he said that his daughter had promised him whatever he asked if he got a ball, and when I got the ball off she went and left me there.

"Well," said the father. "you must keep your promise."

So she went to the frog and asked what he would like, and he said, "Let me eat off your plate and sleep in your bed and sit on your chair."

So she shivered at the thought, but she had to keep her promise, so he ate off her plate, and when the night came he slept on her bed, and when morning came he went out, and the princess thought she was relieved of him, but it was all in vain.

When night came the frog came back again and on her pillow all night long for three nights in succession until the third morning there beside her in the bed a lovely prince instead of a frog, and she was frightened very much. And he told her all the story of what happened, and he said that of hundred years ago there lived an old witch and turned me into a frog by her bad evil. And she said that he could not be released until a king's daughter would come and speak to him and let him eat off her plate and sleep on her pillow and sit on her chair, and as soon as this was done he was turned to his right shape.

Then they fell in love and got married and lived happily ever afterwards.

- Source: dúchas.ie >> The Schools' Collection >> Co. Roscommon >> Páirc an Iarla, pp. 90-91.
- The material on this site is made available under the CC BY-NC 4.0 licence.
- The Schools' Collection is a manuscript collection of folklore compiled by schoolchildren in Ireland in the 1930s.
- Informant: Martin Murray, aged 30, farmer; Rathpeak, County Roscommon.
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A Story: A King in Ireland Who Had Three Daughters

Ireland

Once upon a time there lived a king in Ireland who had three daughters. The youngest daughter was a beautiful girl. Every day she would go to a pond which was near the castle and play with her golden ball under the shade of the trees.

One day as she was playing with her pet dog, she dropped her ball into the water. She did not know how she would get it out again, and her father would behead her if she went home without her golden ball. She began to weep.

Suddenly she heard a voice, and on looking, she saw a frog near. The frog said to her. "Why do you weep, daughter of a king."

The princess said her ball fell into the water, and she could not go home to her father without it.

"I will fish it out to you," said the frog, "if you promise me three wishes. You must take me home with you, you must let me eat on your [table] and sleep in your bed."

The frog took the ball out of the water and gave it to the princess.

She ran home to her dinner, but the frog came after her. Before the dinner was over, a knock came to the door. The king told the princess to answer the call. He asked her who was at the door and she said it was a frog. She told the king what had happened. The king told her to let in the frog as she promised. Very reluctantly the princess obeyed. The frog hopped up on her chair and began to eat off her plate.

He then hopped on to her bed. At this the princess became angry. She took the frog and threw him against the floor. Immediately the frog was changed into a beautiful young prince. She was surprised to see what had happened.

The prince said he was bewitched and was put into that pond to be released by a king's daughter. He married the princess and they both lived in his father's castle.

- Source: dúchas.ie >> The Schools' Collection >> Co. Sligo >> Bunninadden, pp. 294-96.
- The material on this site is made available under the CC BY-NC 4.0 licence.
- The Schools' Collection is a manuscript collection of folklore compiled by schoolchildren in Ireland in the 1930s.
- Collector: Margaret McDonagh. Informant: Mrs. James Gallagher, Spotfield, County Sligo.
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The Queen Who Sought a Drink from a Certain Well

Scotland

There was before now, a queen who was sick, and she had three daughters. Said she to the one who was eldest, "Go to the well of true water, and bring to me a drink to heal me."

The daughter went, and she reached the well. A *losgann* (frog or toad) came up to ask her if she would wed him, if she should get a drink for her mother.

"I will not wed thee, hideous creature! on any account," said she.

"Well then," said he, "thou shalt not get the water."

She went away home, and her mother sent away her sister that was nearest to her, to seek a drink of the water. She reached the well, and the toad came up and asked her if she would marry him if she should get the water.

"I won't marry thee, hideous creature!" said she.

"Thou shalt not get the water then," said he.

She went home, and her sister that was youngest went to seek the water. When she reached the well the toad came up as he used, and asked her if she would marry him if she should get the water.

"If I have no other way to get healing for my mother, I will marry thee," said she; and she got the water, and she healed her mother.

They had betaken themselves to rest in the night when the toad came to the door saying:

A chaomhag, a chaomhag,	Gentle one, gentle one,
An cuimhneach leat	Rememberest thou
An gealladh beag	The little pledge
A thug thu aig	Thou gavest me
An tobar dhomh?	Beside the well?
A ghaoil, a ghaoil!	My love, my love!

When he was ceaselessly saying this, the girl rose and took him in, and put him behind the door, and she went to bed; but she was not long laid down, when he began again saying, everlastingly:

A hàovaig, a hàovaig,
An cuineach leat
An geallug beag
A hoog oo aig
An tobar gaw,
A géule, a géule.

Then she got up and she put him under a noggin [small wooden pail]. That kept him quiet a while. But she was not long laid down when he began again, saying:

A hàovaig, a hàovaig,
An cuineach leat
An geallug beag
A hoog oo aig
An tobar gaw,
A géule, a géule.

She rose again, and she made him a little bed at the fireside.

But he was not pleased, and he began saying, "A chaoimheag, a chaoimheag, an cuimhneach leat an gealladh beag a thug thu aig an tobar dhomh, a ghaoil, a ghaoil."

Then she got up and made him a bed beside her own bed.

But he was without ceasing, saying, "A chaoimheag, a chaoimheag, an cuimhneach leat an gealladh beag a thug thu aig an tobar dhomh, a ghaoil, a ghaoil."

But she took no notice of his complaining, till he said to her, "There is an old rusted glave [sword] behind thy bed, with which thou hadst better take off my head than be holding me longer in torture."

She took the glave and cut the head off him. When the steel touched him, he grew a handsome youth; and he gave many thanks to the young wife, who had been the means of putting off him the spells under which he had endured for a long time.

Then he got his kingdom, for he was a king; and he married the princess, and they were long alive and merry together.

- Source (books.google.com): J. F. Campbell, *Popular Tales of the West Highlands: Orally Collected*, vol. 2 (Edinburgh: Edmonston and Douglas, 1860), no. 33, pp. 130-32.
- Source (Internet Archive): J. F. Campbell, *Popular Tales of the West Highlands: Orally Collected*, vol. 2 (Edinburgh: Edmonston and Douglas, 1860), no. 33, pp. 130-32.
- Campbell's source: Mrs. MacTavish, Port Ellen, Islay.
- From Campbell's notes to this tale (pp. 133-34):

  > The lady who has been so kind as to write down this, and other stories, is one of my oldest friends. She has brought up a large family, and her excellent memory now enables her to remember tales, which she had gathered during a long life passed in the West Highlands, where her husband was a respected minister. The story is evidently a Celtic version of the "Wearie Well at the Warldis End," of which Chambers has published one Scotch version, to which Grimm refers in notes "Der Froschkönig," in his third volume. There are many versions still current in Scotland, told in broad Scots; and it can be traced back to 1548. According to Grimm it belongs to the oldest in Germany. This version clearly belongs to the Gaelic language, for the speech of the frog is an imitation of the gurgling and quarking of spring frogs in a pond, which I have vainly endeavored to convey to an English reader by English letters; but which is absurdly like, when repeated in Gaelic with this intention. The persevering, obstinate repetition of the same sounds is also exceedingly like the habit of frogs, when disturbed, but not much frightened. Let anyone try the experiment of throwing a stone into the midst of a frog concert, and he will hear the songsters, after a moment of stillness, begin again. First a half-smothered guark guark; then another begins, half under water, with a gurgle, and then more and more join in till the pond is in full chorus once again. Guark, guark, gooill -- -- gooark gooill -- --.
  >
  > Holy healing wells are common all over the Highlands; and people still leave offerings of pins and nails, and bits of rag, though few would confess it. There is a well in Islay where I myself have, after drinking, deposited copper caps amongst a board of pins and buttons, and similar gear, placed in chinks in the rocks and trees at the edge of the "Witches' Well." There is another well with similar offerings, freshly place beside it in an island in Loch Maree in Ross-shire; and similar wells are to be found in many other places in Scotland. For example, I learn from Sutherland, that "a well in the black Isle of Cromarty near Rosehaugh has miraculous healing powers. A country woman tells me that about forty years ago she remembers it being surrounded by a crowd of people every first Tuesday in June who bathed or drank of it before sunrise. Each patient tied a string or rag to one of the trees that overhung it before leaving. It was sovereign for headaches. Mr. __ remembers to have seen a well here called Mary's Well, hung round with votive rags."

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The Paddo

Scotland

A poor widow was one day baking bannocks, and sent her dochter wi' a dish to the well to bring water. The dochter gaed, and better gaed, till she came to the well, but it was dry. Now, what to do she didna ken, for she couldna gang back to her mother without water; sae she sat down by the side o' the well, and fell a-greeting. A paddo [frog] then came loup-loup-louping out o' the well, and asked the lassie what she was greeting for; and she said she was greeting because there was nae water in the well.

"But," says the paddo, "an ye'll be my wife, I'll gie ye plenty o' water."

And the lassie, no thinking that the poor beast could mean anything serious, said she wad be his wife, for the sake o' getting the water. So she got the water into her dish, and gaed away hame to her mother, and thought nae mair about the paddo, till that night, when, just as she and her mother were about to go their beds, something came to the door, and when they listened, they heard this sang:

O open the door, my hinnie, my heart,
O open the door, my ain true love;
Remember the promise that you and I made,
down i' the meadow, where we twa met.

Says the mother to the dochter, "What noise is that at the door?"

"Hout," says the dochter, "it's naething but a filthy paddo."

"Open the door," says the mother, "to the poor paddo." So the lassie opened the door, and the paddo came loup-loup-louping in, and sat down by the ingle-side. Then he sings:

O gie me my supper, my hinnie, my heart,
O gie me my supper, my ain true love;
Remember the promise that you and I made,
Down i' the meadow, where we twa met.

"Hout," quo' the dochter, 'wad I gie a filthy paddo his supper?"

"O ay," said the mother, "e'n gie the poor paddo his supper." So the paddo got his supper; and after that he sings again:

O put me to bed, my hinnie, my heart,
O put me to bed, my ain true love;
Remember the promise that you and I made,
Down i' the meadow, where we twa met.

"Hout," quo' the dochter, "wad I put a filthy paddo to bed?"

"O ay," says the mother, "put the poor paddo to bed." And so she put the paddo to his bed. (Here let us abridge a little.) Then the paddo sang again:

Now fetch me an axe, my hinnie, my heart,
Now fetch me an axe, my ain true love;
Remember the promise that you and I made,
Down i' the meadow, where we twa met.

Well, the lassie chappit aff his head; and no sooner was that done, than he started up the bonniest young prince that ever was seen. And the twa lived happy a' the rest o' their days.

- Source (books.google.com): Robert Chambers, *Popular Rhymes of Scotland*, new edition (London and Edinburgh: W. and R. Chambers, 1870), pp. 87-89.
- Source (Internet Archive): Robert Chambers, *Popular Rhymes of Scotland*, new edition (London and Edinburgh: W. and R. Chambers, 1870), pp. 87-89.
- Note by Chambers concerning his source: "The above is ... from the memory of the late Charles K. Sharpe, Esq., who would be sitting at the knee of Nurse Jenny, his father's house of Hoddam in Dumfriesshire, about the year 1784."
- Chambers' note within his text "Here let us abridge a little" apparently alludes to material deemed inappropriate for his sensitive readers.
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The Well of the World's End

Scotland

Once upon a time, and a very good time it was, though it wasn't in my time, nor in your time, nor anyone else's time, there was a girl whose mother had died, and her father had married again. And her stepmother hated her because she was more beautiful than herself, and she was very cruel to her. She used to make her do all the servant's work, and never let her have any peace.

At last, one day, the stepmother thought to get rid of her altogether; so she handed her a sieve and said to her, "Go, fill it at the Well of the World's End and bring it home to me full, or woe betide you" For she thought she would never be able to find the Well of the World's End, and, if she did, how could she bring home a sieve full of water?

Well, the girl started off, and asked everyone she met to tell her where was the Well of the World's End. But nobody knew, and she didn't know what to do, when a queer little old woman, all bent double, told her where it was, and how she could get to it. So she did what the old woman told her, and at last arrived at the Well of the World's End.

But when she dipped the sieve in the cold, cold water, it all ran out again. She tried and she tried again, but every time it was the same; and at last she sate down and cried as if her heart would break. Suddenly she heard a croaking voice, and she looked up and saw a great frog with goggle eyes looking at her and speaking to her.

"What's the matter, dearie?" it said.

"Oh, dear, oh dear," she said, "my stepmother has sent me all this long way to fill this sieve with water from the Well of the World's End, and I can't fill it no how at all."

"Well," said the frog, " if you promise me to do whatever I bid you for a whole night long, I'll tell you how to fill it."

So the girl agreed, and then the frog said:

Stop it with moss and daub it with clay,
And then it will carry the water away;

and then it gave a hop, skip and jump, and went flop into the Well of the World's End.

So the girl looked about for some moss, and lined the bottom of the sieve with it, and over that she put some clay, and then she dipped it once again into the Well of the World's End; and this time, the water didn't run out, and she turned to go away.

Just then the frog popped up its head out of the Well of the World's End, and said, "Remember your promise."

"All right," said the girl; for thought she, "What harm can a frog do me?"

So she went back to her stepmother, and brought the sieve full of water from the Well of the World's End. The stepmother was fine and angry, but she said nothing at all.

That very evening they heard something tap tapping at the door low down, and a voice cried out:

Open the door, my hinny, my heart,
Open the door, my own darling;
Mind you the words that you and I spoke,
Down in the meadow, at the World's End Well.

"Whatever can that be?" cried out the stepmother, and the girl had to tell her all about it, and what she had promised the frog.

"Girls must keep their promises," said the stepmother. "Go and open the door this instant." For she was glad the girl would have to obey a nasty frog.

So the girl went and opened the door, and there was the frog from the Well of the World's End. And it hopped, and it skipped, and it jumped, till it reached the girl, and then it said:

Lift me to your knee, my hinny, my heart;
Lift me to your knee, my own darling;
Remember the words you and I spoke,
Down in the meadow by the World's End Well.

But the girl didn't like to, till her stepmother said, "Lift it up this instant, you hussy! Girls must keep their promises!"

So at last she lifted the frog up on to her lap, and it lay there for a time, till at last it said:

Give me some supper, my hinny, my heart,
Give me some supper, my darling;
Remember the words you and I spake,
In the meadow, by the Well of the World's End.

Well, she didn't mind doing that, so she got it a bowl of milk and bread, and fed it well. And when the frog had finished, it said:

Go with me to bed, my hinny, my heart,
Go with me to bed, my own darling;
Mind you the words you spake to me,
Down by the cold well, so weary.

But that the girl wouldn't do, till her stepmother said, "Do what you promised, girl; girls must keep their promises. Do what you're bid, or out you go, you and your froggie."

So the girl took the frog with her to bed, and kept it as far away from her as she could. Well, just as the day was beginning to break what should the frog say but:

Chop off my head, my hinny, my heart,
Chop off my head, my own darling;
Remember the promise you made to me,
Down by the cold well so weary.

At first the girl wouldn't, for she thought of what the frog had done for her at the Well of the World's End. But when the frog said the words over again, she went and took an axe and chopped off its head, and lo! and behold, there stood before her a handsome young prince, who told her that he had been enchanted by a wicked magician, and he could never be unspelled till some girl would do his bidding for a whole night, and chop off his head at the end of it.

The stepmother was that surprised when she found the young prince instead of the nasty frog, and she wasn't best pleased, you may be sure, when the prince told her that he was going to marry her stepdaughter because she had unspelled him. So they were married and went away to live in the castle of the king, his father, and all the stepmother had to console her was, that it was all through her that her stepdaughter was married to a prince.

- Source (books.google.com): Joseph Jacobs, *English Fairy Tales* (London: David Nutt, 1890), pp. 215-19.
- Source (Internet Archive): Joseph Jacobs, *English Fairy Tales* (London: David Nutt, 1890), pp. 215-19.
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The Well of the World's End

Ireland

Once upon a time a widow sent her daughter to a well called the "well of the world's end" for a bucket of water as she wanted to make an oat meal cake. The girl took the bucket, but when she came to the well it was empty.

A frog which was near the well told her that he would fill the well if she promised to marry him. After the girl had promised to marry him, the frog jumped into the well and in a minute the well was full of water.

The girl filled her bucket and went home.

On the following night the frog came to the girl's house and asked her to cut of his head. The girl did so, and a beautiful prince stood before her. The girl and the prince were married soon after.

- Source: dúchas.ie >> The Schools' Collection >> Co. Canan >> Drumkilly, p. 348.
- The material on this site is made available under the CC BY-NC 4.0 licence.
- The Schools' Collection is a manuscript collection of folklore compiled by schoolchildren in Ireland in the 1930s.
- Informant: Mr. Patrick Galligan.
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The Maiden and the Frog

England

Many years ago there lived on the brow of a mountain, in the north of England, an old woman and her daughter. They were very poor, and obliged to work very hard for their living, and the old woman's temper was not very good, so that the maiden, who was very beautiful, led but an ill life with her.

The girl, indeed, was compelled to do the hardest work, for her mother got their principal means of subsistence by traveling to places in the neighborhood with small articles for sale, and when she came home in the afternoon she was not able to do much more work. Nearly the whole domestic labor of the cottage devolved therefore on the daughter, the most wearisome part of which consisted in the necessity of fetching all the water they required from a well on the other side of the hill, there being no river or spring near their own cottage.

It happened one morning that the daughter had the misfortune, in going to the well, to break the only pitcher they possessed, and having no other utensil she could use for the purpose, she was obliged to go home without bringing any water. When her mother returned, she was unfortunately troubled with excessive thirst, and the girl, though trembling for the consequences of her misfortune, told her exactly the circumstance that had occurred.

The old woman was furiously angry, and so far from making any allowances for her daughter, pointed to a sieve which happened to be on the table, and told her to go at once to the well and bring her some water in that, or never venture to appear again in her sight.

The young maiden, frightened almost out of her wits by her mother's fury, speedily took the sieve, and though she considered the task a hopeless one to accomplish, almost unconsciously hastened to the well. When she arrived there, beginning to reflect on the painful situation in which she was placed, and the utter impossibility of her obtaining a living by herself, she threw herself down on the brink of the well in an agony of despair.

Whilst she was in this condition, a large from came up to the top of the water, and asked her for what she was crying so bitterly. She was somewhat surprised at this, but not being the least frightened, told him the whole story, and that she was crying because she could not carry away water in the sieve.

"Is that all?" said the frog; "cheer up, my hinny! for if you will only let me sleep with you for two nights, and then chop off my head, I will tell you how to do it."

The maiden thought the frog could not be in earnest, but she was too impatient to consider much about it, and at once made the required promise. The frog then instructed her in the following words:

Stop with fog (moss),
And daub with clay;
And that will carry
The water away.

Having said this, he dived immediately under the water, and the girl, having followed his advice, got the sieve full of water, and returned home with it, not thinking much of her promise to the frog. By the time she reached home the old woman's wrath was appeased, but as they were eating their frugal supper very quietly, what should they hear but the splashing and croaking of a frog near the door, and shortly afterwards the daughter recognized the voice of the frog of the well saying:

Open the door, my hinny, my heart,
Open the door, my own darling;
Remember the word you spoke to me
In the meadow by the well-spring.

She was now dreadfully frightened, and hurriedly explained the matter to her mother, who was also so much alarmed at the circumstance, that she dared not refuse admittance to the frog, who, when the door was opened, leapt into the room, exclaiming:

Go wi' me to bed, my hinny, my heart,
Go wi' me to bed, my own darling;
Remember the words you spoke to me,
In the meadow by the well-spring.

This command was also obeyed, although as may be readily supposed, she did not much relish such a bedfellow. The next day, the frog was very quiet, and evidently enjoyed the fare they placed before him, the purest milk and the finest bread they could procure. In fact, neither the old woman nor her daughter spared any pains to render the frog comfortable. That night, immediately supper was finished, the frog again exclaimed:

Go wi' me to bed, my hinny, my heart,
Go wi' me to bed, my own darling;
Remember the words you spoke to me,
In the meadow by the well-spring.

She again allowed the frog to share her couch, and in the morning, as soon as she was dressed, he jumped towards her, saying:

Chop off my head, my hinny, my heart,
Chop off my head, my own darling;
Remember the words you spoke to me,
In the meadow by the well-spring.

The maiden had no sooner accomplished this last request, than in the stead of the frog there stood by her side the handsomest prince in the world, who had long been transformed by a magician, and who could never have recovered his natural shape until a beautiful virgin had consented, of her own accord, to make him her bedfellow for two nights. the joy of all parties was complete; the girl and the prince were shortly afterwards married, and lived for many years in the enjoyment of every happiness.

- Source (books.google.com): James Orchard Halliwell-Phillipps, *Popular Rhymes and Nursery Tales: A Sequel to the Nursery Rhymes of England* (London: John Russell Smith, 1849), pp. 43-47.

  Source (Internet Archive): James Orchard Halliwell-Phillipps, *Popular Rhymes and Nursery Tales: A Sequel to the Nursery Rhymes of England* (London: John Russell Smith, 1849), pp. 43-47.
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The Frog Gentleman

England

There was a farmer that had an only daughter; and she was very handsome, but proud. One day, when the servants were all afield, her mother sent her to the well for a pitcher of water.

When she had let down the bucket, it was so heavy that she could hardly draw it up again; and she was going to let loose of it, when a voice in the well said, "Hold tight and pull hard, and good luck will come of it at last."

So she held tight and pulled hard; and when the bucket came up there was nothing in it but a frog, and the frog said, "Thank you, my dear; I've been a long while in the well, and I'll make a lady of you for getting me out."

So when she saw it was only a frog, she took no notice, but filled her pitcher and went home.

Now, when they were at supper, there came a knock at the door, and somebody outside said:

Open the door, my dearest sweet one,
And think of the well in the wood;
Where you and I were together, love a keeping,
And think of the well in the wood.

So she looked out of the window, and there was the frog in boots and spurs.

So says she, "I sha'n't open the door for a frog."

Then says her father, "Open the door to the gentleman. Who knows what it may come to at last?"

So she opened the door, and the frog came in. Then says the frog:

Set me a chair, my dearest sweet one,
And think of the well in the wood;
Where you and I were together, love a keeping,
And think of the well in the wood.

"I'm sure I sha'n't set a chair; the floor's good enough for a frog."

The frog makes many requests, to all of which the lady returns uncivil answers. He asks for beer, and is told, "Water is good enough for a frog;" to be put to bed, but, "The cistern is good enough for a frog to sleep in."

The father, however, insists on her compliance; and even when the frog says, "Cuddle my back, my dearest sweet one," orders her to do so, "For who knows what it may come to at last?"

And in the morning, when she woke, she saw by her side the handsomest gentleman that ever was seen, in a scarlet coat and top-boots, with a sword by his side and a gold chain round his neck, and gold rings on his fingers; and he married her and made her a lady, and they lived very happy together.

- Source (books.google.com): *Notes and Queries*, vol. 5, no. 133 (May 15, 1852), p. 460.
- Source (Internet Archive): *Notes and Queries*, vol. 5, no. 133 (May 15, 1852), p. 460.
- The narrator of this tale (identified only as H. B. C.) does not give the story a title, identifying it only as "a version of the *Froschkönig*" from Oxfordshire.
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The Kind Stepdaughter and the Frog

England

I have often had this tale told to me by my nurse when a child, and heard the following version a short time ago in Holderness [Yorkshire], and was informed it had been told thus for ages:

> There was a stepmother who was very unkind to her stepdaughter and very kind to her own daughter; and used to send her stepdaughter to do all the dirty work. One day she sent her to the pump for some water when a little frog came up through the sink and asked her not to pour dirty water down, as his drawing room was there. So she did not; and as a reward, he said pearls and diamonds should drop from her mouth when she spoke.
>
> When she returned home it happened as he said; and the stepmother, learning how it had come about, sent her own daughter to the pump. When she got there the little frog spoke to her and asked her not to throw dirty water down, and she replied, "Oh! you nasty, dirty little thing, I won't do as you ask me."
>
> Then the frog said, "Whenever you speak, frogs, and toads, and snakes shall drop from your mouth."
>
> She went home and it happened as the frog had said. At night when they were sitting at the table a little voice was heard singing outside:
>
> Come bring me my supper,
> My own sweet, sweet one.
>
> When the stepdaughter went to the door, there was the little frog. She brought him in in spite of her stepmother, took him on her knee, and fed him with bits from her plate. After a while he sang:
>
> Come, let us go to bed,
> My own sweet, sweet one.
>
> So, unknown to her stepmother, she laid him at the foot of her bed, as she said he was a poor, harmless thing. Then she fell asleep and forgot all about him.
>
> Next morning there stood a beautiful prince, who said he had been enchanted by a wicked fairy and was to be a frog till a girl would let him sleep with her. They were married, and lived happily in his beautiful castle ever after.

This is one of the few folk stories I have been able to collect from the lips of a living storyteller in England.

- Source (books.google.com): W. Henry Jones and Lewis L. Kropf, *The Folk-Tales of the Magyars* (London: Published for the Folk-Lore Society by Elliot Stock, 1889), pp. 404-405.
- Source (Internet Archive): W. Henry Jones and Lewis L. Kropf, *The Folk-Tales of the Magyars* (London: Published for the Folk-Lore Society by Elliot Stock, 1889), pp. 404-405.
- This tale, and the statement concerning its provenance, were written by W. Henry Jones as a commentary to the Hungarian story The Wonderful Frog. He does not give his English version a title.
- This story includes elements from other traditional folktales:
    - Underground People Disturbed by Farm Waste, Christiansen migratory legend type 5075.
    - The Kind and the Unkind Girls, Aarne-Thompson-Uther folktale type 480.
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The Frog Prince

Sri Lanka (Northwestern Province)

At a city there is a certain king; a widow lives at a house near his palace. She subsists by going to this royal palace and pounding rice there; having handed it over, she takes away the rice powders and lives on it.

During the time while she was getting a living in this way, she bore a frog, which she reared there. When it was grown up, the king of that city caused this proclamation to be made by beat of tom-toms, "I will give half my kingdom, and goods amounting to an elephant's load to the person who brings the Jeweled Golden Cock that is at the house of the Rakshasi (ogress).

The frog took the bundle of rice, and hanging it from his shoulder, went to an indi (wild date) tree, scraped the leaf off a date spike (the mid-rib of the leaf), and strung the rice on it. While going away after stringing it, the frog then became like a very good-looking royal prince, and a horse and clothing for him made their appearance there. Putting on the clothes he mounted the horse, and making it bound along he went on till he came to a city.

Hearing that he had arrived, the king of that city prepared quarters for this prince to stay at, and having given him ample food and drink, asked, "Where art thou going?"

Then the prince said, "The king of our city has made a proclamation by beat of tom-toms, that he will give half his kingdom and an elephant's load of gold to the person who brings him the Jeweled Golden Cock that is at the Rakshasi's house. Because of it I am going to fetch the Jeweled Golden Cock."

The king, being pleased with the prince on account of it, gave him a piece of charcoal. "Should you be unable to escape from the Rakshasi while returning after taking the Jeweled Golden Cock, tell this piece of charcoal to be created a fire fence, and cast it down," he said. Taking it, he went to another city.

The king of that city in that very manner having prepared quarters, and made ready and given him food and drink, asked, "Where art thou going?" The prince replied in the same words, "I am going to bring the Jeweled Golden Cock that is at the house of the Rakshasi." That king also being pleased on account of it, gave him a stone, "Should you be unable to escape from the Rakshasi, tell this stone to be created a mountain, and cast it down," he said.

Taking the charcoal and the stone which those two kings gave him, he went to yet another city. The king also in that very manner having given him quarters, and food and drink, asked, "Where art thou going?" The prince in that very way said, "I am going to bring the Jeweled Golden Cock." That king also being greatly pleased gave him a thorn. "Should you be unable to escape from the Rakshasi, tell a thorn fence to be created, and cast down this thorn," he said.

On the next day he went to the house of the Rakshasi. She was not at home; the Rakshasi's daughter was there. That girl having seen the prince coming and not knowing him, asked "Elder brother, elder brother, where are you going?"

The prince said, "Younger sister, I am not going anywhere whatever. I came to beg at your hands the Jeweled Golden Cock which you have got."

To that she replied, "Elder brother, today indeed I am unable to give it. Tomorrow I can. Should my mother come now she will eat you; for that reason come and hide yourself."

Calling him into the house, she put him in a large trunk at the bottom of seven trunks, and shut him up in it.

After a little time had passed, the Rakshasi came back. Having come and seen that the prince's horse was there, she asked her daughter, "Whose is this horse?"

Then the Rakshasi's daughter replied, "Nobody's whatever. It came out of the jungle, and I caught it to ride on."

The Rakshasi having said, "If so, it is good," came in. While lying down to sleep at night, the sweet odor of the prince having reached the Rakshasi, she said to her daughter, "What is this, Bola? A smell of a fresh human body is coming to me."

Then the Rakshasi's daughter said, "What, mother! Do you say so? You are constantly eating fresh bodies; how can there not be an odor of them?"

After that, the Rakshasi, taking those words for the truth, went to sleep.

At dawn on the following day, as soon as she arose, the Rakshasi went to seek human flesh for food. After she had gone, the Rakshasa-daughter, taking out the prince who was shut up in the box, told that prince a. device on going away with the Jeweled Golden Cock: "Elder brother, if you. are going away with the cock, take some cords and fasten them round my shoulders. Having put them round me, take the cock, and having mounted the horse, go off, making him bound quickly. When you have gone, I shall cry out. Mother comes when I give three calls. After she has come, loosening me will occupy much time; then you will be able to get away."

In the way she said, the prince tied the Rakshasa-daughter, and taking the Jeweled Golden Cock mounted the horse, and making it bound quickly came away.

As that Rakshasa-daughter said, while she was calling out, the Rakshasi came. Having come, after she looked about (she found that) the Rakshasa-daughter was tied, and the Jeweled Golden Cock had been taken away. After she had asked "Who was it? Who took it?" the Rakshasa-daughter said, "I don't know who it was." After that, she very quickly unfastened the Rakshasa-daughter, and both of them came running to eat that prince.

The prince was unable to go quickly. While going, the prince turned round, and on looking back saw that this Rakshasi and the Rakshasa-daughter were coming running to eat that prince.

After that, he cast down the thorn which the above-mentioned king of the third city gave him, having told a thorn fence to be created. A thorn fence was created. Having jumped over it, they came on.

After that, when he had put down the piece of stone which the king of the second city gave him, and told a mountain to be created a mountain was created. They sprang over that mountain also, and came on.

After that, he cast down the charcoal which the king of the first city gave him, having told a fire fence to be created. In that very manner, a fire fence was created. Having come to it, while jumping over it, both of them were burnt and died.

From that place, the prince came along. While coming, he arrived at the Indi tree on which he had threaded the rice, and having taken off it all that dried-up rice, he began to eat it. On coming to the end of it, the person who was like that prince again became a frog.

After he became a frog, the clothes that he was wearing, and the horse, and the Jeweled Golden Cock vanished. Out of grief on that account, that frog died at that very place.

- Source (Internet Archive): H. Parker, *Village Folk-Tales of Ceylon*, vol. 1 (London: Luzac and Company, 1910), pp. 67-70.
- "Bola" is a word without any special meaning in English, often used in addressing a person familiarly and somewhat disrespectfully. [footnote by Parker]
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A Frog for a Husband

Korea

Off in a valley, among very stony mountains, lived an old farmer named Pak We and his wife. His land was poor and he had to toil from sunrise to sunset and often in the night, when the moon was shining, to get food. No child had ever come to his home and he was in too great straits of poverty to adopt a son. So he took his amusement in fishing in the pond higher up on the hills that fed the stream which watered his millet and rice fields. Being very skilful, he often caught a good string of fish and these he sold in the village nearby to get for himself and his wife the few comforts they needed. Thus the old couple kept themselves happy, despite their cheerless life, though they often wondered what would become of them when they got too old to work.

But one summer Pak noticed that there were fewer fish in the pond, and that every day they seemed to be less in number. Where he used to catch a stringful in an hour, he could hardly get half that many during a whole day.

What was the matter? Was he getting less skilful? Was the bait poor? Not at all! His worms were as fat, his hooks and lines in as good order, and his eyesight was as keen as ever.

When Pak noticed also that the water was getting shallower, he was startled. Could it be that the pond was drying up? Things grew worse day by day until at last there were no fish.

Where once sparkled the wavelets of a pond was now an arid waste of earth and stones, over which trickled hardly more than a narrow rill, which he could jump over. No fish and no pond meant no water for his rice fields. In horror at the idea of starving, or having to move away from his old home and become a pauper, Pak looked down from what had been the banks of the pond to find the cause of all this trouble. There in the mud among the pebbles he saw a bullfrog, nearly as big as an elephant, blinking at him with its huge round eyes.

In a rage the farmer Pak burst out, charging the frog with cruelty in eating up all the fish and drinking up all the water, threatening starvation to man and wife. Then Pak proceeded to curse the whole line of the frog's ancestors and relatives especially in the female line, for eight generations back, as Koreans usually do.

But instead of being sorry, or showing any anger at such a scolding, the bullfrog only blinked and bowed, saying, "Don't worry, Farmer Pak. You'll be glad of it, by and by. Besides, I want to go home with you and live in your house."

"What! Occupy my home, you clammy reptile! No you won't," said Pak.

"Oh! but I have news to tell you and you won't be sorry, for you see what I can do. Better take me in."

Old Pak thought it over. How should he face his wife with such a guest? But then, the frog had news to tell and that might please the old lady, who was fond of gossip. Since her husband was not very talkative, she might be willing to harbor so strange a guest. So they started down the valley. Pak shuffled along as fast as his old shins could move, but the bullfrog covered the distance in a few leaps, for his hind legs were three feet long.

Arrived at his door, Mrs. Pak was horrified at the prospect of boarding such a guest. But when the husband told her that Froggie knew all about everybody and could chat interestingly by the hour, she changed her manner and bade him welcome. Indeed, she so warmed in friendliness that she gave him one of her best rooms. All the leaves, grass, and brushwood that had been gathered in the woodshed to supply the kitchen fire and house flues, was carried into the room. There it was doused with tubs of water to make a nice soft place such as bullfrogs like. After this he was fed all the worms he wanted.

Then after his dinner and a nap, Mrs. Pak and Mr. Pak donned their best clothes and went in to make a formal call on their guest. Mr. Pak put on his horsehair hat and long white coat, as white as snow, which had been starched and beaten by his loving wife, until it glistened all over like hoar frost.

Mr. Bullfrog was so affable and charming in conversation, besides telling so many good stories and serving up so many dainty bits of gossip, that Mrs. Pak was delighted beyond expression. Indeed, she felt almost like adopting Froggie as her son.

The night passed quietly away, but when the first rays of light appeared, Froggie was out on the porch singing a most melodious tune to the rising sun. When Mr. and Mrs. Pak rose up to greet their guest and to hear his song, they were amazed to find that the music was bringing them blessings. Everything they had wished for, during their whole lives, seemed now at hand, with more undreamed of coming in troops. In the yard stood oxen, donkeys, and horses loaded with every kind of box, bale, and bundle, waiting to be unloaded, and more were coming; stout men porters appeared and began to unpack, while troops of lovely girls in shining white took from the men's hands beautiful things made of jade, gold, and silver. There were fine clothes and hats for Mr. Pak, jade-tipped hairpins, tortoise-shell and ivory combs, silk gowns, embroidered and jeweled girdles, and every sort of frocks and woman's garments for Mrs. Pak, besides inlaid cabinets, clothes racks, and wardrobes. Above all, was a polished metal mirror that looked like the full autumn moon, over which Mrs. Pak was now tempted to spend every minute of her time.

Four or five of the prettiest maidens they had ever seen in all their lives danced, sang and played sweetest music. The unpacking of boxes, bales, and bundles continued. Tables of jade and finest sandalwood were spread with the richest foods and wines. Soon, under the skilful hands of carpenters and decorators, instead of oiled paper on the floors, covering old bricks and broken flat stones set over the flues, and smoky rafters and mud walls poorly papered, there rose a new house. It had elegant wide halls and large rooms with partitions made of choicest joiner work. It was furnished with growing flowers, game boards for chess, and had everything in it like a palace.

As for the riches of the larder and the good things to eat daily laid on the table, no pen but a Korean's can tell of them all. In the new storehouse were piles of dried fish, edible seaweed, bags of rice, bins of millet, tubs of kim-chee made of various sorts of the pepper-hash, and Korean hot pickle in which the natives delight, to say nothing of peaches, pears, persimmons, chestnuts, honey, barley, sugar, candy, cake, and pastry, all arranged in high piles and gay colors.

The old couple seemed able to eat and enjoy twice as big dinners as formerly, for all the while the adopted bullfrog was very entertaining. Mr. and Mrs. Pak laughed continually, declaring they had never heard such good stories as he told. The good wife was, however, quite equal to her guest in retailing gossip. One of her favorite subjects, of which she never tired, was the beauty and charm of Miss Peach. She was the accomplished daughter of the big Yang-ban, or nobleman, Mr. Poom, who lived in a great house, with a host of servants and retainers in the next village, and Mrs. Pak insisted there was no young woman in the world like her. It was noticed that Mr. Bullfrog was particularly interested when Miss Peach Poom was the subject of the old lady's praises.

After a week of such luxury, during which Mr. and Mrs. Pak seemed to dwell in the Nirvana, or Paradise, which the good priests often talked about, Mr. Pak's full cup of joy was dashed to earth when the bullfrog informed him that he intended to marry, and that Mr. Pak must get him a wife. Still worse than that, Pak was informed by the frog that he would have no one but Miss Peach, the daughter of Poom, so renowned for her beauty and graces.

At this, old Pak nearly went wild. He begged to be excused from the task, but the bullfrog was inexorable. So, after imprecating his wife's tongue, for her ever putting it into the frog's head to marry Miss Peach, he donned his fine clothes and set out to see Mr. Poom. He expected to be beaten to death for his brazen effrontery in asking a noble lady to marry a frog.

Now this Mr. Poom had long been the magistrate of a district, who had squeezed much money wrongly from the poor people over whom he ruled, and having won great wealth, had retired and come back to his native place to live. Yet to keep up his old habits, he still kept a cross bench on which common people who offended him were thrown and beaten with paddles, until often they went away bleeding cripples. This man had two daughters married, but the third, the youngest and most beautiful, Miss Peach, now eighteen years old, was the only one Mr. Bullfrog would have for his bride.

Arriving at the Pooms' grand mansion, Mr. Pak told of the suitor's wealth, power and fame, high position and promise, and how he had made the old couple happy.

Old Poom had pricked up his ears from the first mention of riches and power, and became highly interested as Pak went on sounding the praises of his prospective son-in-law.

"And what is his name?" asked Mr. Poom.

Here Pak was in a quandary. He knew that the frog family was the oldest and most numerous in the world and was famous for fine voices. He fell into a brown study for a few minutes. Then, looking up, he declared that he had so long thought of the suitor's graces and accomplishments, that he had forgotten his name and could not then recall it.

So Mr. Poom, in order to help Pak out, ran over the list of famous families in Korea, reciting the names of the Kims, Sims, Mins, the Hos, Chos, Kos, Quongs, and Hongs, etc., etc., for Mr. Poom was an authority on the Korean peerage.

"It is none of these," said Pak. "I deeply regret that I cannot recall the name."

"Strange," said Mr. Poom. "I have named all the families of any standing in the kingdom. What is his office or rank and where do his relations live?"

Pak was pressed so hard by Mr. Poom's searching questions that at last he had to confess that the suitor for the beautiful maiden was not a man but a frog.

"What! Do you want me to marry my daughter to a pond-croaker? You shall suffer for thus insulting me in my own house. Slaves, bring the cross bench and give this wretch twenty blows."

Forthwith, while four men brought out the whipping bench, three others seized poor Pak, stripped off his coat, and bound him with feet and arms stretched out to the bench. Then a tall, stalwart fellow raised the huge paddle of wood to let fall with all his might on the bare flesh of the old man. But all this while the sky was darkening, and, before the first blow was given, the lightning flashed, the thunder rolled, and floods of rain fell that threatened to overwhelm house, garden, and all in a deluge. The hail, which began to pelt the cattle, was first the size of an egg and then of stones, like cannon balls.

"Hold," cried the frightened Mr. Poom. "I'll wait and ask further."

Thereupon the lightning and thunder ceased, the sun burst out in splendor.

Mightily impress by this, Mr. Poom at last agreed to let his daughter become the bride of the frog, not telling her who her husband was to be. Within an hour, while she was getting ready, a string of fine horses and donkeys with palanquins loaded with presents for the bride and her family appeared. Besides boxes of silk dresses and perfumes, headgear and articles for a lady's boudoir, there were troops of maidens to wait on the bride. Arraying Miss Peach in the loveliest of robes, they also dressed her hair, until, what with satin puffs and frame, jade-tipped silver hairpins, rosettes, and flowers, her headgear stood over a foot high above her forehead, on which was the bride's red round spot.

Then, when the happy maiden had sufficiently admired herself in the metal mirror and heard the praises of her attendant virgins, she entered the bridal palanquin -- a gorgeous mass of splendor. According to custom, her eyes were sealed shut and covered with wax, for a Korean bride sees nothing of her husband until the end of the feast, when she meets him in the bridal chamber.

So to his house she was carried in great pomp and with gay attendance of brilliantly arrayed maidens. The marriage ceremony and the grand supper were happy affairs for all the guests, even though the bride, according to Korean etiquette, was as if blind, quietly and patiently waiting sightless throughout the whole joyful occasion. The actual ceremony was witnessed only by the foster parents and the bridegroom.

When in the bridal chamber, the bride having unsealed her eyes, and her vision being clear, she looked up at the one she had married and found not a man, but a frog, she was furiously angry. She burst out into a protest against having such a bridegroom. Gently and in tenderest tones the bridegroom attempted first to comfort her. Then, handing her a pair of scissors, he begged her to rip open the skin along his back from shoulder to thigh, for it was very tight and he was suffering pain from it. In her bitter disappointment at being married to a frog, she seized the scissors and almost viciously began to cut from nape to waist. Her surprise was great to find what seemed to be silk underneath the speckled skin.

When she had slit down two yards or so, her husband the frog stood upon his hind legs. He twisted himself about as if in a convulsion, pulled his whole speckled hide hard with his front paws, and then jumping out of his skin, stood before his bride a prince. Fair, tall, of superb figure, and gorgeously arrayed, he was the ideal of her dreams. A jeweled baldric bound his waist, embroidery of golden dragons on his shoulders and breast told of his rank, while on his head was the cap of royalty with a sparkling diamond in the centre. Yet no clothes, handsome as they were, could compare in beauty with his glorious manhood. Never had she seen so fair a mortal.

Happy was the bride whose feelings were thus changed in a moment from repulsion and horror to warmest affection and strongest veneration. The next morning when, to the amazement of his foster father and mother, Mr. and Mrs. Pak, the prince presented himself and his bride at breakfast, he told the story of his life. As son of the King of the Stars he had committed some offense, in punishment for which his father condemned him to live upon the earth in the form of a frog. Furthermore he had laid upon his son the duty of performing three tasks. These must be done before he should be allowed to come back and live in Star Land. These were, to drink up all the water in the lake, to eat all the fish, and to win a human bride, the handsomest woman in the world.

All the precious things which he had presented to Pak and his wife to make their old days comfortable, and the gifts sent to the bride's house before her wedding day, had come by power from the skies. Now, leaving his foster parents on earth to enjoy their gifts, he must return home to his father, taking his bride with him. Scarcely had he spoken these words than a chariot and horses, silver bright, appeared at the door of the house. Bowing low to his foster parents, and stepping in with his bride, the pair disappeared beyond the clouds. From this time forth a new double star was seen in the sky.

- Source (books.google.com): William Elliot Griffis, *The Unmannerly Tiger, and Other Korean Tales* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1911), pp. 112-125.
- Source (Internet Archive): William Elliot Griffis, *The Unmannerly Tiger, and Other Korean Tales* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1911), pp. 112-125.
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Links to Related Sites

- A comparison of the Grimms' 1812 and 1857 versions of "The Frog King" (in English translation): The Frog King; or, Iron Henry by the Brothers Grimm: A Comparison of the Versions of 1812 and 1857.
- A comparison of the Grimms' 1812 and 1857 versions of "The Frog King" (in the original German): Der Froschkönig; oder, Der eiserne Heinrich von den Brüdern Grimm: Ein Vergleich der Fassungen von 1812 und 1857.
- The Frog Prince, *Wikipedia*.
- Der Froschkönig oder der eiserne Heinrich, *Wikipedia*.
- Frog King: Annotated Tale, *SurLaLune*.
- Frog King in Pictures, Illustrations, and Drawings, *Top Illustrations*.
- Grimm Brothers Home Page.
- More animal bridegroom stories:
    1. Beauty and the Beast (Jeanne-Marie LePrince de Beaumont).
    2. Hog Bridegrooms.
    3. Snake and Serpent Bridegrooms.
    4. East of the Sun and West of the Moon (Norway).
    5. Married to Magic: Animal Brides and Bridegrooms by Terri Windling.
- D. L. Ashliman's **folktexts**, a library of folktales, folklore, fairy tales, and mythology.
- Folk and Fairy Tale Links.
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